

WILSON TO ACT AS STEEL PRICE CONFEREES FAIL

All Rates Set by Industrial Board Are Too High, Hines Says.

PEEK EAGER TO FIGHT Crippled Industry and Cutting Off of Wages Seen in Lower Charges.

Special Despatch to The Sun. WASHINGTON, April 10.—All negotiations are at an end in the fight among Administration officials over steel prices. President Wilson has been asked to intercede and save the situation, his advisers having agreed only to disagree. Mr. Hines, following two personal conferences with Chairman Peek of the Industrial Board, issued a public statement to-night declaring that he could not approve of the Industrial Board prices because they were too high, and cited his reasons. Chairman Peek replied, declaring there would be a showdown and that the board would fight it out. He made it clear that the board would not quit. It will continue to function, he said, unless otherwise ordered by the President.

For more than a week the contending forces have conferred and endeavored to get together. Neither would yield, however.

Situation Before Wilson. Both sides made it clear that the President would be asked for a decision as the result of the failure of his assistants and advisers to reach an agreement. The Industrial Board is laying the situation before the President by cable. This was done, it was said, because haste was important to end uncertainty and to settle the industrial situation.

Mr. Peek says Director-General Hines will have to accept responsibility for frustrating Administration efforts to bring quick readjustment from war conditions. The prices reached are fair, he contends, and lower ones will have a serious industrial effect resulting in the closing down of industries and cutting off of wages. He also says that Mr. Hines is exercising monopolistic control.

Mr. Hines issued this statement: "After repeated consideration of the steel and iron prices proposed by the Industrial Board I am still of opinion that those prices are too high and therefore that the Railroad Administration cannot approve them as being reasonable prices."

No Power to Fix Rates.

"It has been perfectly clear to me throughout the discussion of this matter and I think it is now generally understood that no power was conferred on the Industrial Board to impose any prices upon the Railroad Administration, but that it retained the power and also was under a duty to exercise its own judgment in respect to this important matter. Throughout the discussion in the Industrial Board itself Mr. Powell, the representative of the Railroad Administration, indicated that the final approval of any prices so far as the Railroad Administration was concerned rested with the Director-General himself."

Mr. Powell during the discussion objected that not only the prices on steel rails but the prices generally were unreasonably high and before the committee announced its action he positively stated the Railroad Administration would not agree to buy at the proposed prices.

"After the board had announced the prices I took the matter under consideration and asked my advisers in purchasing matters to give me their views on the subject. A conference was held, attended by John Skelton Williams, E. S. Lovett, Henry Walters, members of the advisory committee on purchases of the Railroad Administration; T. C. Powell, director of the Division of Capital Expenditures, and Henry B. Spencer, director of the Division of Purchases. The conference before taking action consulted Chairman Lovett as to questions of cost of steel production. This conference expressed the unanimous opinion that the prices were too high."

Price Opinion Confirmed.

"Afterward Mr. Peek raised the question whether it would be worth while to get the views of the representatives of the steel industries, and I arranged for Messrs. Lovett, Walters and Spen-

cer to have a conference to meet Mr. Peek and his representatives, and this conference took place yesterday. As a result of this discussion my advisers were again confirmed in the opinion that prices were too high.

"In view of these considerations I cannot do otherwise than to announce definitely that I must refuse to recognize these prices as being reasonable, either for the present or for the future. To the extent that the Railroad Administration finds it necessary to make purchases it will continue to make them on the best terms obtainable by fair and just methods, with full recognition of the principle that a Government agency with large purchasing power must be particularly careful not even to attempt action which could be regarded as oppressive."

"The O. K. of the Railroad Administration throughout has been to obtain a fair and reasonable price level. It has never contemplated that it should get a lower price level than the general public."

Harm to Public Seen. "In the newspaper discussions of this matter the suggestion has at times occurred that the principal thing to establish some price which the Government will endorse to the end that the public will begin buying at that price and that the mere establishment of a price for this purpose is more important than the intrinsic reasonableness of the price itself. I cannot agree with this principle."

"I am keenly alive to the great desirability of stimulating business in every reasonable way, but I believe in the long run that the improvement by a Government purchasing agency of an excessive price level would be harmful to the public interest and would not bring to be obtained will come only by reaching a price level which the public itself shall consider to be reasonable."

"I believe one of the greatest problems that confronts this country is that of getting prices back to a reasonable level, and I believe progress in that direction is seriously retarded by the approval of a governmental purchasing agency of prices which it deems excessive."

PEEK BLAMES HINES IN PRICE DISPUTE

Statement Issued Over Refusal to Settle Rates.

WASHINGTON, April 10.—The controversy between the Railroad Administration and the Industrial Board of Commerce's Industrial Board was brought to a head to-day by the definite and refusal of Director-General Hines to accept the new steel price schedule approved by the board after conferences with the steel industry.

A statement was issued for the Industrial Board by its chairman, George N. Peek, after the Director-General had made public his final decision. Mr. Peek's statement in part follows:

"The Director-General of Railroads has to-day given to the press a statement definitely refusing to accept the prices on steel approved by the Industrial Board as representing fair prices for public buying. This statement discloses what has already been developed in repeated conferences with the Railroad Administration, that the reasons for the Director-General's refusal are, first, that he denies the right of the Industrial Board to impose a price upon the Railroad Administration, and, second, that he is of the opinion that the prices are too high."

"The public must be informed of the magnitude of the sole responsibility assumed by the Director-General in this important decision."

"The Industrial Board was formed to carry out a perfectly defined industrial policy to which the Government, represented by the President, the Cabinet and the Director-General, was fully committed. To the complete success of this plan, however, there was one absolute essential, that the Government departments should express the confidence of the Government in the execution of this most important policy. Especially is this true in respect of steel rails, in the buying of which the Government, through its control of the railroads, consumes a very large percentage of the output."

"At this late date in the execution of the plan this important essential to its success has been denied by the Director-General of Railroads, and by that denial the labor of the Industrial Board is set at naught, and the Government is exhibited as setting up an industrial policy with one hand and destroying it with the other."

180 CZECHS, 30 REDS KILLED.

Civilians Cruelly Treated at Ungvar, Southwest of Lemberg.

COPENHAGEN, April 10.—In a battle at Ungvar, about 100 miles southwest of Lemberg, between the Reds and the Czechs, 180 Czechs and 30 Czechs were killed, according to advices from Budapest under date of Wednesday. The civilian population is reported to have been subjected to many cruelties.

Deputy Wants Peace Committee.

PARIS, April 10.—Henry Franklin-Bouillon, chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Chamber of Deputies, has asked the Chamber to appoint a special committee to examine the questions to be solved by the Peace Conference. The committee would have ninety members.

HAIG CALLS ALLIES VICTORY A 'MIRACLE'

Narrow Margin in Stemming First German Onrush Is Shown.

RUSSIA WAS BIG LOSS

Great Battles of 1916 and 1917 Drained Foe and Brought 1918 Triumph.

LONDON, April 10.—Field Marshal Sir Douglas Haig, in his final despatch, now made public, presents an important review of the war and describes in detail the expansion and achievements of the British army, with many remarkable facts and figures. He treats the operations on the western front as a single continuous campaign in which can be recognized the same general features and necessary stages that, between forces of approximately equal strength, have marked all the conclusive battles of history.

"The high water mark of our fighting strength in infantry," says the British commander, "was only reached after two and a half years of conflict, by which time heavy casualties had already been incurred. It was not until midsummer, 1916, that the artillery situation became even approximately adequate to the conduct of major operations."

Anxiety Over Guns.

"During the Somme battle artillery ammunition had to be watched with the greatest care. During 1917 ammunition was plentiful, but the gun situation caused anxiety. It was only in 1918 that artillery operations could be conducted without any limiting considerations beyond that of transport."

"The margin with which the German onrush of 1918 was stemmed was so narrow and the subsequent struggle was so severe that the word 'miraculous' is hardly too strong a term to describe the recovery and ultimate victory of the Allies."

"The breakdown of Russia in 1917 probably prolonged the war by a year, and the military situation in Italy in the autumn of 1917 necessitated the transfer of five British divisions to Italy at a time when the presence in France might have had far-reaching effects."

Sir Douglas records the interesting fact that more than half the British casualties in the fighting of 1918 occurred during the five months from

March to July, when the Allies were on the defensive.

"The rapid collapse of Germany's military powers in the latter half of 1918," he says, "was the logical outcome of the fighting of the previous two years. It would not have taken place but for that period of ceaseless attrition which used up the German reserves. It is in the great battles of 1916 and 1917 that all men have to seek for the secret of our victory in 1918."

The value of cavalry in modern war is emphasized by Sir Douglas Haig, and in discussing the value of mechanical contrivances such as tanks he observes, immense as their influence might have been, they could not by themselves decide a campaign. Their true role is to assist infantrymen, by whose rifles and bayonets only can decisive victory be won.

The expansion of British personnel, artillery, ammunition transport, railway construction and establishments of every kind in France is dwelt upon by the Field Marshal. Regarding machine guns the British equipment increased from one gun to 500 infantrymen in 1914 to one to twenty infantrymen in 1918. The 486 pieces of artillery with the British took the field in 1914 were represented at the date of the armistice by 6,437.

Ammunition Figures Shown. On the first day of the Somme battle in 1916 almost 13,000 tons of artillery ammunition were fired by the British on the Western front. On two days, September 29 and 30, 1917, 42,000 tons were expended, and in the three days of the crucial battle on September 27, 28 and 29, 1918, almost 45,000 tons were fired by the British artillery.

Sir Douglas says that the feature of the war which to the historian may well appear most noteworthy is the creation of the new British army, which was successfully built up in the very midst of the war.

"The total of more than 327,000 German prisoners captured by us on the western front," says Sir Douglas, "is in striking contrast to the force of six divisions, comprising some 80,000 fighting men, with which we entered the war. That we should have been able to accomplish this stupendous task is due partly to the loyalty and devotion of our Allies and to the splendid work of the Royal navy, but mainly to the wonderful spirit of the British race in all parts of the world."

BRITISH-SPANISH PACT READY. Romanones and Enay Confer—To Sign Treaty To-day.

MADRID, April 10.—Premier Romanones had a conference to-day with the British Ambassador concerning the convention between Great Britain and Spain, which will be signed to-morrow. England, by this treaty, will permit the importation of Spanish oranges and will ship to Spain 150,000 tons of coal a month. Spain will lend Great Britain 25,000,000 pesetas (\$15,000,000) at 5 per cent.

GERMAN INSOLENCE GROWS IN COBLENZ

Inhabitants Over Occupied Area Gloat at Ruin Caused in France.

U. S. ARMY RULE FLOUTED

Troops on Rhine Not Sign of Defeat, Merely Armistice, They Argue.

By HERBERT BAILEY. Special Cable Despatch to The Sun from the London Times Service.

COBLENZ, April 10.—The increasing insolence of the Germans in this area is a matter of concern to those here who hoped the Germans defeated in the war would mend their manners and learn a lesson in dealing with foreign nations. However, it would appear from local indications that all such hopes have been vain.

I have spoken to several Germans here to learn what they think will be the future of Germany, and one is amazed to hear such a line of argument as that Germany is ruined by the war and therefore Germany starts off with a great advantage. They are even gloating over German destruction in France, and there are continual references to the fact that Germany stands intact by comparison. The Germans insist our presence on the Rhine is no sign of defeat, that we are here as the result of agreement, and this line of argument leads them to expound curious ideas as to the rights of German civilians in the occupied areas.

A few days ago, a case came before a military tribunal of Americans in which a German was charged with breaking one of the American regulations. The soldier for the Germans calmly arose and announced that the Americans had no right to submit German civilians to trial under military law.

"Why?" exclaimed the American. "Had not the Germans military tribunals in Belgium and France?"

"Yes," agreed the German, "that is true, but then we were dealing with conquered countries and conquered territories and you are here only as an outcome of the armistice."

One can imagine the amazement of the Americans.

Another characteristic of the Germans, that of whining, is frequently shown. The Burgomaster of Ahrweiler was arrested for a serious offence and

sentenced to imprisonment. His friends sent an appeal for his release on the usual grounds of ill health, and this individual, who had defied the Americans, became the most contemptible whiner of all.

His protestations of being ill and of suffering mentally from imprisonment

were such that the Americans, more in amused contempt than anything else, inflicted a fine of \$500 (\$2,500) and remitted the penalty.

The value of a German civilian life has been computed at 80,000 marks (\$20,000) by the German authorities, who have made claims for this sum from

the Americans for each of the widows of two men who were killed, presumably during disturbances, within the past month. The attitude the Germans have adopted is that the United States is not now at war with Germany and that such claims are proper and legal under the circumstances.

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